



# PREScribed FIRE NOTIFICATION

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ■ BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
LAS CRUCES FIELD OFFICE ■ 1800 MARQUESS ■ LAS CRUCES NM 88005

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## For Immediate Release

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## Pile burning reduces wildland fire risk

BLM protects one of New Mexico's 20 Most-at-Risk communities with fuel break completion.

LAS CRUCES - Smoke will be highly visible the week of February 7<sup>th</sup> as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) burns slash piles in the Timberon area. BLM will be completing a fuel break on McGregor Range – withdrawn public lands for military purposes – adjacent to the community.

The project, which was scheduled for completion with a prescribed burn in January, has 40 acres of piles remaining because weather did not permit completion of fuel break last month.

Five people and one engine will be onsite to burn the 40 acres of piles. Heaped together in the slash piles are piñon and juniper limbs and brush that BLM crews previously thinned.

The shaded fuel break, running close to 3 miles long, is protecting roughly 500 homes.

Timberon, at the south end of the Sacramento Mountains in Otero County, was identified in 2000 by the New Mexico State Forestry Department as one of the top twenty communities “at-risk” of wildfire in New Mexico. The community sits on the edge of both BLM-managed public lands and the McGregor Range.

Local community contractors were brought in to help thin and pile 66 acres. Treatments included thinning, prescribed burning, and both broadcast burns and meadow restoration after the rest of the piles are burned.

The project, started in September 2003, is a cooperative effort of the BLM, U.S. Army at Fort Bliss, the Lincoln National Forest and the community. Future thinning projects in the adjacent area of ponderosa pine will be conducted to maintain forest health.

The BLM will notify local State and federal fire agencies and the Sheriff's Office on all days that burning is conducted. Please feel free to contact the BLM or local fire departments with any questions or concerns about smoke in the area.

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